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MONTGOMERY GI BILL (MGIB-SR) SELECTED RESERVE ENHANCEMENTS

The Reserve Officers Association and the Reserve Enlisted Association urge the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs, Economic Opportunity subcommittee to support Selected Reserve education reforms for all Reserve Component personnel.

Those enhancements should include:

- All GI Bill funding and administration belongs under the jurisdiction of the Senate and House committees on Veteran Affairs.
- Include deployed Reservists under MGIB-Active to allow qualification by accumulating active duty time; earning up to 36 months of benefit at 100 percent.
- Permit continued access to MGIB-SR education throughout a Reservists career.
- Continues for 10 years following separation or transfer from the Selected Reserve in paid drill status.
- Return the MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606) to 47 percent of MGIB-Active.
- Include 4-year as well as 6- year reenlistment contracts to qualify for a prorated MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606) benefit.
- Continue MGIB-SR eligibility of Reservists who are involuntarily transferred from pay to non-pay and continue to maintain qualifying years.
- Stipulate that RC personnel can use their education benefits while mobilized.
- Transfer unused benefits for career service-members to family members.
- Allow use of the MGIB benefit to pay off student loans.

Background

Congress re-established the GI Bill in 1984. The MGIB, codified in USC Title 38, Chapter 30, was designed to stimulate All-Volunteer Force recruitment and retention and to help veterans readjust to the civilian world on completion of their service.

At the same time, the Selected Reserve MGIB program was first codified under Chapter 1606 of USC Title 10 intended as a recruiting and retention incentive. Because of this post-service benefits have not been authorized, which can actually be a disincentive.

Guard and Reserve members may be entitled to receive up to 36 months of MGIB-SR education benefits. This benefit not only has a positive effect on the individual, but the military benefited by having an educated force.

At the beginning of MGIB until the late 1990s, Reserve MGIB benefits maintained proportional parity with the basic active duty program, paying nearly 50 percent of active duty benefit rates. Yet, the MGIB-SR has not kept pace with national military strategy and force deployment policies.

MGIB-SR began to erode as a benefit at parity just as the active forces began to be deployed more, and thousands of Guard and Reserve were recalled or mobilized to provide operational support. MGIB-SR pays approximately 28.5 percent of MGIB-Active.

In 2004, Congress attempted to rectify the growing gap between reserve and active duty benefit rates by establishing a new MGIB Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) for reservists activated for more than 90 days for a contingency operation with, Chapter 1607, Title 10 USC.

To qualify for Chapter 1606 a Reserve Component member must enlist or reenlist for six years. Members eligible for Chapter 1606, when activated, can switch to Chapter 1607 GI Bill, which pays up to 80 percent of the Active MGIB (Chapter 30), based on duration of service.

Reserve service members usually have 14 years to use their MGIB-SR benefits starting the first day they become eligible. This eligibility ends when Guard or Reserve members stop drilling with pay. If a demobilized Reservist stops drilling, he or she may switch from chapter 1607 benefits back to chapter 1606 benefits for a period equaling the length of deployment plus four months. Active Duty recipients have 10 years after separation to use their benefits.

The incremental manner in which Chapters 30, 1606, and 1607 have evolved has led to inequities in educational benefits. Based on their service in the Global War of Terrorism both at home and abroad, today's military reservists deserve enhancements to their eligibility under the MGIB for Selected Reserves.

Program	USC	Current Monthly Rates			Length of Service
		Full	$\frac{3}{4}$ time	$\frac{1}{2}$ time	
MGIB-Active	Title 38 Chapter 30	\$1,075.00	\$806.25	\$537.50	24-36 mos.
MGIB-SR REAP	Title 10 Chapter 1607	\$860.00	\$645.00	\$430.00	2 years + consecutive
MGIB-SR REAP	Title 10 Chapter 1607	\$645.00	\$483.75	\$322.50	1 year + consecutive
MGIB-SR REAP	Title 10 Chapter 1607	\$430.00	\$322.50	\$215.00	90-364 days consecutive
MGIB –SR	Title 10 Chapter 1606	\$309.00	\$231.00	\$153.00	6 year commitment

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